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BY

ALFRED CAPEL SHAW.

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P R E F A C E.



THE Poems in this collection are the fruit of what have been ostensibly my leisure hours during the past two years. In saying this however, I do not wish to imply that I look upon the composition of Poetry as an agreeable trifle that may well enough occupy the intervals of more serious work: on the contrary, I deem the Poet's work the very noblest that a man can be called to do, and feel that it demands the employment of the highest powers of the mind.

Feeling thus, I have given such care and thought to the composition of the several pieces in this volume as lay in my power, and though I cannot expect but that even a friendly criticism will dis-

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cover many of those imperfections in design and execution, which not infrequently mark first efforts, yet I trust my verses are not incapable of affording, to some minds at least, that pleasure and stimulus which it is the mission of Poetry to provide.

The poems are arranged mainly in the order in which they were written, the chief exception to this rule being the Sonnet to Keats, which, though standing first, belongs to a much later portion of the volume. This being the case, I venture to hope that my book may not be judged solely by its earlier pages.

REDRUTH,

May 1st, 1874.

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TO KEATS.

O KEATS, thou darling of the Minstrel throng!
How short thy life, short and so full of pain,
But long enough to sow on earth the grain
Of immortality. To thee along
My lyre I sweep. O that my notes were strong
And sweet and clear, as those that in thy strain
Erst blended were! then might I hope to gain
Such honour as to thee doth now belong.
Sweet is the hope: may it not prove in vain!
Altho' my life is even now as long
As thine when it was ended. Thou hadst ta'en
By this thy seat the immortal gods among;
While still my muse sits on the level plain,
Pluming her wing for her first flight of song.

TO MY FATHER
ON
HIS FORTY-NINTH BIRTHDAY.

READING this poem—one of my earliest efforts—after the lapse of nearly two years, I am conscious of certain imperfections in its execution, but do not see how I can make any satisfactory change without altering it so much as to destroy its original character, which I am desirous of preserving. In revising it, therefore, I have contented myself with such pruning and alteration as are consistent with that desire, and offer it to the public in the main as it was first written,—a spontaneous and genuine tribute to the worth of one who has always been to me a kind and sympathising Friend.

FATHER, within our happy home to-day,
Thine other children gather round the hearth,
And offer thee, a pleasant custom sure,
Their heartfelt wishes for thy happiness;
Perchance some little gift, that has employ'd
Their fingers secretly in bygone weeks;

Or inexpensive trifle, that may serve
In after years, to witness to their love ;
Not that thou needest aught to witness that,
For well thou know'st it now. Gifts should not be
Our hearts forerunners ; only worthy then,
When love has gone before and paved their path.

Ere I had left our home ; left all too soon,
For never since that time, tho' many years
Have past away, have I had settled home,
Or long abiding place ; but ever urged
By an indwelling spirit of unrest,
Have flitted here and there, and much have toil'd
To reach some envied goal : which, being gain'd,
Has insufficient seem'd to satisfy.
For thence, above me towering, have I seen
Some loftier point still urging me to climb ;
Some higher level, where I thought to reap
The ripen'd harvest of my long sown hopes.
And so the vantage ground already gain'd,
No longer tempted me to stay and rest,
But I my toilsome steps bent upward still,

And still am bending : for there seems no end,
When once we leave the ignoble plains below ;
But ever are we forced to toil and climb ;
And, with undaunted hearts, our march direct
Onward and upward. There is no retreat :
The door by which we leave the beaten path
Opens but outward, yielding no return ;
Nor is return desired. Who that has breathed
The pure fresh air, that blows around the mount
Up whose steep sides we climb with so much toil,
Would seek again the level plains that lie
Around its base, altho' they restful be ?
Not I ; for I would rather always climb,
Altho' I never reach the mountain top,
Then pass my days in slothful ease below.
There's pleasure in the climbing. O 'tis joy
In the full vigour of our strength and youth,
To tread all obstacles beneath our feet ;
To feel that we have carv'd ourselves a path ;
To sip beforehand of the cup of fame ;
To think that after, when, our life work done,
Our bodies slumber in our Mother's arms,

We may live on, and immortality
Find in the memories of our fellow-men.
But I have wander'd from my theme, not this
I meant to say when I began ; but thought
On thought came crowding, line on line,
Till in the length of my parenthesis
I fear you must have long forgot the words
With which the sentence I erstwhile began ;
So to resume. Ere I had left our home,
I with the others did my offering bring,
And wish'd thee joy, and long-life happiness ;
And altho' distance and stern duty's call
Must keep me absent from the little group ;
Yet would I not to-day be quite shut out,
Or altogether silent ; so have written
This little lay. 'Tis all I have to give
But it will serve, as well as costlier gift,
To show thee that to thee I am not chang'd ;
Or if I am, 'tis but in this, that I
Esteem and honour thee still more, than when
In childhood's all unthinking hour, I play'd
About our home unconscious of thy worth.

Then I knew not, in truth, how could I know?
The sterling qualities of heart and mind
That years of intercourse have since reveal'd;
For tho' 'tis long since first I left that home,
Yet ever and anon have I return'd
To spend a pleasant season 'neath its roof;
And holding frequent converse with thee then,
Have learnt to know and value thee aright.

Father, how oft on summer eve have we
Full slowly paced the gravel'd garden walk;
Or at the bottom of that garden stood,
And watch'd the speckled trout, as noiselessly
They darted here and there in the cool stream
That murmuring flows beneath the crumbling wall;
There, closely knit in wordless fellowship,
That sweetly strange and solemn intercourse
Of mind with mind,—when words too cumbrous are,
To be the medium of our vivid thoughts,—
Oft have we stood; while all around grew still,
And ev'n the miller hush'd his busy wheel,
And the clear water that all day had toil'd,

Obedient to the tyrant will of man,
To turn the wheel within its gloomy shed,
A stone-throw only from the garden wall,
Pour'd madly forth, in foaming eagerness
To reach its destined bourn, the far-off sea ;
And with its ever varying music broke,—
Sweet breach I ween,—the settled hush of night.
Or sometimes, farther ranging from the house,
The Roman Road, memorial of the past,
Attracted us as evening shadows fell.
There, to and fro upon the soft green turf
That clothes its undulating course, we walked ;
And watched the setting sun, that shot athwart
The hazel-boughs a flood of golden light,
While round about us caper'd in mad glee
Our little dog, and with his joyous bark
Startled the rabbits, that had stolen forth
To crop the juicy herbs, till in affright
They fled, and he, pleased that they ran, gave chase.

Much in those evening hours I learnt from thee ;
For garner'd in thy mind, a store thou hadst

Of lofty thoughts ; the growth of quiet years
Spent in a quiet place, a sleepy nook,
Embosom'd by the gently rising hills
That girdle it on every side around
And shut it in. There Time moves slowly on,
Nor ever seems to use his winged feet,
But paces forward with majestic step,
Day after day, year after year the same ;
No other change than rolling seasons bring
To mark the year, or stir the sluggish depths
Of dreamy village life. The mingled din
And deep-voiced tumult of the larger world,
The clash of weapons in the social war,
The shock of thought with thought, the clanging
noise
Of fetters falling from the souls of men,
Are there unheard ; or on some listening ear,
Keener to catch the sounds of distant strife,
Fall faintly as an echo, or the moan
Of far-off breakers surging on the rocks.
And such an ear was thine. Those soften'd sounds,
Those echoes of the great world's busy life

Fell on thine ear, and in their falling struck
A sympathetic chord within thy soul ;
And then that quiet uneventful life
Proved nursing mother to thy thought, for forced,
From lack of fellowship with kindred minds,
To hold communion often with thyself,
Thou didst investigate full many a maze
And tangled web of thought, and didst discern
The great untruth of much that is deem'd true ;
And I who talk'd with thee, as friend with friend,
My own mind brightening with a dawning light,
Reap'd of the harvest of thy riper thought.

Deem it not strange that I have farther gone
Than thou thyself wilt go in casting off
The bonds that ignorance fasten'd on our race ;
For thoughts are not exempt from Nature's law
Of growth and change. From mind to mind they
pass,
And passing take from every different mind
An impress and a colour. Thus these thoughts
That I received from thee, within my mind

With others meeting, drawn from other founts,
Brought forth another fruit : yet not for this
Be thou estranged from me, since I have but
Follow'd my judgment, even as thou thine ;
Nay, rather share the creed of him who sings
Unto his Dorian lyre this Melody, " There lives
More faith in honest doubt, believe me than
In half the creeds," Altho' I claim no faith.
Blind Faith, thou darling of a narrow school !
Thou like a nightmare on the souls of men
Dost sit, and seek'st, but too successfully,
To quench the pure and brightly-burning flame
Of Reason, life's divinest lamp and light.
Reason, the god-like power, that raises man
Unto the throne of all this mighty world,
And gives him kingly sway, must be subdued,
Nay, more, be libell'd as an opposing force
Unto the unknown God, ere we can take
Without denial, all that priests have taught.
I have but follow'd where my reason led ;
I heard a voice that summon'd me away,
A mighty voice that thrill'd my soul, and then

A quicker torrent rush'd thro' all my veins,
A warmer heart within my bosom glow'd,
A nobler life allur'd me from afar,
And I awoke from the bewilder'd sleep
In which I long had lain to find it day.

Father, I owe thee much, far more than I
Can e'er repay, or would ev'n if I could.
Still would I be thy debtor, still would feel
The bond of obligation. Thou my life,
An unsought boon, didst give, a boon of worth ;
For tho' our life is often grain'd with care
And pain and sorrow with it interweave,
Yet it is sweet to live, to feel, to know.
Once having tasted life, once having known
What joy it is to Be, I would not lose
That consciousness, and be again unborn
Altho' the future lay unmingled woe :
But that it does not : never human life
Is sadness unalloy'd, but light and shade
There always mingle, and the shadows deep,
As in a perfect landscape, serve to break

The otherwise too bright monotony.
This life thou gav'st and many other gifts
Which much I prize, and—but I cannot tell
How much I owe to thee. I have not words
To speak the thanks I feel, but ere I lay
My pen aside, will wish thee many years
Of life and health and ever-growing joy.
May time deal gently with thee in his flight,
Nor black-browed Care his angry-footed steeds
Drive o'er thy brow, but Age alone disturb,
And with the silver crown thy head adorn.
As we may sometimes see at morning's dawn
The sky o'erhung with clouds that hide the sun
Till he gain power to pierce and then dispel;
So is it oft in life, so may it be
With thee and thine, the past that cloudy morn
Soon to give place to bright and sunny day,
A day of deepening beauty till the sun go down.

THE VIOLETS.

ONE day in early spring, I spied
Upon a bank, some violets blowing,
And eager to possess them, tried
To reach the spot where they were growing ;

But long in vain, for right between
Me and the bank, came rippling by
A little rill, o'er which not e'en
A chance there seem'd of passing dry.

Until at last, my patience spent,
While still the flowers were "Flowers of Hope;"
Right through the middle wave I went,
And clamber'd up the grassy slope.

It was a steep and slippery spot,
And fully tax'd my climbing powers ;
And when at length I reached the plot,
Alas ! they were but scentless flowers.

TO ANNIE.

MAIDEN, tell me, Is that flowing
Golden glory hair ?
Or an evening sunbeam, glowing
On thy forehead fair ?

'Tis methinks some beam, benighted
On a summer's eve ;
That having on thy brow alighted,
Never more could leave,

But around thy forehead twining,
With a golden gleam,
Backward o'er thy head inclining,
Pour'd its sunny stream.

DAY-DAWN.

RECOLLECTIONS OF A MORNING ON CARN MARTH
IN THE SUMMER OF 1872.

AN awful silence reigns !
Hill, Dale, and Sea alike asleep ;
 Pale mists hang o'er the plains,
And from the higher levels sweep.
With stealthy tread Night creeps away
To hide itself as dawns the Day.
Light comes at last, a growing gleam.
 The pale grey clouds o'erhead,
 Blush to a rosy red,
As on them one far-reaching beam
Falls lightly. Now the roseate stream
 Doth all the sky o'errun.
 Expectant, all things wait.
Around unbroken stillness reigns,
 Till from beside his mate,

A restless lark arising, gains
The upper air and sees the sun ;
And ever as he soars,
With an unrivall'd power,
A blithe and gladsome chant
From his full heart outpours.
I never, till this morning hour,
Heard strain so jubilant ;
It thrills my inmost soul, and shakes
The stilly air until it wakes
A sweetly echoing sound.
'Tis ended and he seeks the ground,
The echoes die away ;
The riven air again grows still,
While grandly silent o'er yon hill
Mounts up the King of Day.
One moment's pause ; then Nature finds a voice,
And paeans thro' all her realm, Rejoice, Rejoice.

NIGHTFALL.



Night falls around Carn Brea.

By zephyrs soft caress'd,
Sooth'd by the influence of the waning day
In chasten'd splendour ebbing swift away,
I lie in dreamy rest.

Around the birds in broken music sing
Short requiems over day's fast dying king.

Nought in the azure deep!
Nought but a floating gull,
That far above me with majestic sweep,
Wheels on, his wing within the wave to steep,
His weary soul to lull
On yonder Ocean's gently rocking breast,
Flushed with the glory of the golden west.

To meet the purple sea,
The sun is sinking fast;

His dying glories stream resplendently
Around his grave, his dying glories be
On Earth and Sky. At last
Beneath the wave he vanisheth from sight,
And yields his realm to velvet-footed night.

All sounds die out apace
And comes a solemn hush.
Soul-speaking silence settles on the place,
And folds all Nature in its soft embrace,
While with a quicken'd rush
Thought chases thought where fancy leads the way,
Uncheck'd, unbound, in wild and joyous play.

Below, upon the vale
The gathering darkness grows.
The creeping shadows loom on hill and dale,
Forms lose their form, the brightest colours pale,
The flowers in sadness close :
The stars peer out from their abodes on high,
And glide in silence thro' the darkening sky.

And now 'tis wholly dark

Save round old rugged Brea ;

Where faintly streaming from the western arc,

Light lingers still, but barely serves to mark

The winding rock strewn way,

By which, ere that soft gleam can wholly wane,

I leave the Carn and pensive seek the plain.

MOONLIGHT.

ONE evening we wander'd beneath the hill,
All round about us the night grew still,
And overhead the moon shone bright,
Flooding the plain with her soft pale light.

The bright beams played on the far-off sea,
And the waves were merry as waves could be;
The bright beams fell upon hill and dale,
And out of the mist wove a silvery veil.

Sweet Isabel was with me there,
And the moonbeams play'd in her golden hair,
And soften'd the blush on her lovely cheek
That arose, as she heard me so tenderly speak.

For I had said in a tremulous tone,
While my heart beat fast; Isabel, my own,

Dost thou love me darling? She whisper'd, Yes,
One word, and I seal'd the sweet lips with a kiss.

Oh merrily danc'd the moonbeams then,
Merrily danc'd, as she kiss'd me again ;
While a nightingale sang in a neighbouring grove,
A jubilant paean on fortunate love.

And the low-voiced zephyrs went mad with delight;
And danc'd with the leaves all the live-long night.
All nature, methought, seem'd o'erflowing with glee
On the night Isabel gave her heart unto me.

MARION.

I.

Marion, Sweet Marion,
Thou faithful friend and tried !
Great by thy gentleness,
Strong in thy tenderness,
Thou bind'st me to thy side.
Tho' other friends may range,
Tho' all around me change,
May nothing Thee estrange !
Marion, Sweet Marion,
Till troubled life shall end,
Be thou my steadfast friend !

II.

Marion, Sweet Marion,
I see thine image still !
Engraven on my heart,
Tho' we are thrown apart
I see thee at my will.

Mem'ry no difference know'th,
In mem'ry is no growth ;
Time cannot change thee there,
Time will not make less fair
The image that I bear,
 Sweet Marion, of thee,
 Grav'n on my Memory.

III.

A tiny graceful form,
Bright eyes of sunny brown,
Their lustre partly hid
Beneath a night-fringed lid,
 That lieth soft as down ;
Dark hair, whose many folds
A binding ribbon holds,
 Except one wayward tress
That will not be confin'd,
But flutters in the wind
 In unpent joyousness ;
Sweet lips, a budding rose,
That opening will disclose
 Choice pearls, with rubies bound ;

Fair cheeks, where eglantine
And fragrant lilies twine
Upon a velvet ground.

Marion, Sweet Marion,
Thus thou appear'st to me
Grav'n on my Memory.

IV. .

A true and noble girl
By love made strong and free
A spirit cloth'd with light,
Serene and calm and bright,
Whose spotless purity
Perfumes each thought and deed.

A mind by Truth inspir'd,
By love of freedom fir'd
To scorn the narrow creed
Of social tyranny,
That hedges woman in,
And stamps as social sin
Her longing to be free.
Yet all a woman too,
With heart as warm and true

As woman's heart can be ;
So full of tenderness,
So loving in distress,
So rich in sympathy,
That in a stormy hour,
When calumny and wrong
And all the trooping throng
Of passions, spent their power
Upon my naked breast ;
Its fellowship, like balm
Could heal the wounds, and calm
My throbbing heart to rest.
That choicest, rarest rarity,
A perfect gentlewoman she.
Marion, Sweet Marion,
Thus thou appear'st to me,
Grav'n on my Memory.

LOVE IS NOT ALL.

You think that for a happy marriage then,
Love is not all we need? But nay, you jest,
Or seek to draw me out, that I may build
Laboriously, a feeble argument
For you to overthrow. Thus I to him,
Half laughingly; an old and reverend man,
Whom lately I had met and lov'd; and he,
Tho' fully half a century must pass,
Ere I should measure out his years, seem'd glad
Of my companionship. Some little act
Of courtesy, that chance threw in my way,
Had drawn him to me first, and then perchance
Finding in me some echo of the past,
He sought me out, and we became close friends,
And often, as the summer day closed in
We trod the lane together, where his cot
Stood back a little, bower'd deep in trees;
Or, still more often, as he better loved

I knew not why, we sat beneath the yew
That in the churchyard stood, passing the time
In pleasant intercourse.

His garner'd wealth,
Gather'd from many a harvest field of pain,
I gladly drew upon, and he bestow'd
As willingly; for he was talkative,
As old men are, and in his chequer'd life
Had done and suffer'd much; and being apt
To learn from all he saw, had stor'd his mind
With that deep wisdom, only learnt from life,
Which gave him right to talk.

That night he seem'd
More silent than his wont; as tho' my words
Had bared some painful memory, that time
Had only half entomb'd: at length he said,
"Love is not all in marriage; for the Word
Has something lost of its intrinsic worth;
As coins, tho' passing current still, debase
After long circulation; so this word
So long in use, is somewhat worn away;
And if at any time it held the whole,

It now no longer comprehends the whole
That perfect marriage needs. Mistake me not,
I do not cry down love, nay, for I hold
Better the worst unwedded loneliness,
Than loveless wedlock ; but I cannot hold
As many do, that love is everything ;
That it will equalize all differences
Of temperament and spirit, and produce
From two unlikes, the true and perfect One.
Love there may be, and yet the heart lie waste
In all its nobler powers, from lack of skill
In that which loves, to use the nobler powers.
More hearts are broken thus than Discord breaks ;
More lives made barren, narrowed down, confined
To petty cares and vain frivolities
By this short coming, than by lack of love."

Just as he spake, the neighb'ring organ pealed
For even-song. He stopp'd, and we drew near
To listen to the strain. The tuneful pipes
Breathed only music ; not a jarring note
Was intermingled, but all the many tones

In blended sweetness stole upon the night.
Now swell'd the sound a glorious burst of song ;
Now died away into a soothing strain
That seem'd far distant ; then again drew near,
Clearer and fuller, rolling round the walls
Like mellowed thunder ; all the building shook,
The very earth beneath our conscious feet
Trembled in unison, as wave on wave
Beat through the lab'ring pipes. We stood awhile
In voiceless rapture ; then a sudden light
Flashed in the old man's eye, and " See," said he,
" How by a skilful hand, the organ's powers
And voices are called forth ; the man is taught
By sympathy, to use and blend them all,
And play'd by him, the purpose is fulfill'd
For which 'twas built : but it were grievous waste,
To give it unto one whose utmost skill
Avails him but to amble up and down
A single octave ; none the less a waste
That he produce no discord ambling thus ;
Some music even may wait on his touch
But not enough, vast capabilities

Lie unawakened there ; so noble hearts
Are wasted, linked in union with those
Less noble than themselves ; their melody
Sleeps unsuspected by the feebler heart,
And sleeping dies, unless perchance it wake
Unlawfully, when follows pain to all ;
And yet there may be love between such hearts
Without a doubt ; strong love and true."

He paused,
And I impetuously, " But in the course of time,
Would not the greater soul uplift the less,
Even to its own level ?" " Nay," he said,
" 'Tis so much easier to sink than rise ;
The royal eagle, tether'd to a goose,
Shall sooner learn to walk the grassy mead
Contentedly, than teach the slothful bird
To seek with him his eyrie on the rock ;
Tho', ere the eagle so unlearn the past,
His heart may break. So with unequal souls,
The less impedes the greater, more restrains
Than is itself uplifted ; till the one
That, unimpeded, might have risen high

Above the commonplace, worn out at last
By constant chafing 'gainst its bond, sinks down
Into a state of utter carelessness ;
Plodding a level way, in dull content
And hopeless apathy ; chewing the fruit,
The bitterest Time holds to mortal lips,
Of blighted hopes, and powers run to waste.
Or if—through feebler love—it be not thus ;
And here the lesser love is greater good,
Yielding the greater freedom ; yet will they
Find life a burden ; sever'd in their souls,
United in the animal alone.”

The old man spake as tho' himself had proved
The truth of what he spake ; an undertone
Of sadness mingled in his speech, and I
Could see that his lip quivered as he ceased.
Presuming on his courtesy, I asked
If he had ever met with one whose life
Had thus been blighted ; “Yes,” he said “I knew
One—many years ago—a lovely girl,
Whose life was blighted even as I said ;

For she was wedded unto one whose soul
Was less than hers ; a kindly man enough,
But cramped in mind ; a man whose hopes and fears
And pleasures all were low ; who never felt
Aught of that upward yearning which impels
The spirit onward, will not let it rest
In mediocrity : good easy man,
He moved about content, among the fields
That were his father's, and should be his son's ;
And save for failing crops at times, or plague
That smote his cattle down, or unpaid rents,
Would have been fully happy ; satisfied
Not only Well, but Ill to let alone,
Lest touching, ill should follow ; such a one,
As would not sweep a dusty room, for fear
The dust should rise and trouble him ; but She
Was all unlike ; a spirit quick to feel
And eager to redress. While still a girl,
She looked aghast upon the tyranny
That reigns in social life ; and in her heart
Nourished sweet hopes, and lofty purposes,
Shaping a bright ideal ; and would have made

It real in after years ; but he restrained
And hinder'd her : it was not meet, he said,
That women should do aught but mind the house
And feed and clothe her babes ; and thus he checked
Having the power, her noblest aspirations ”

“ Why did she marry him ? ” I interposed,
“ One so unlike herself ! ” “ Her friends,” he said,
“ Persuaded her, and then he loved her well,
For she was beautiful, and loveable withal ;
And she—well she had pledged herself to him
In youth, ere she had fathom'd her own heart,
Or knew its wants ; loving him too, as well
As she could love a man so opposite
To her own nature ; and, as women will,
Threw round his coarser soul the graceful robe
Of her own fancy ; and if at times it fail'd
To hide his grossness, thought, as you but now,
That she should raise him up, so would not break
Her plighted word, altho' at times she felt,
Ev'n when she loved him best, a sickening sense
Of something wanting in their fellowship ; ✓

And as the time rolled on, she shrank the more
From marrying; a feeling at her heart,
Vague, indefinable, of coming ill;
And so she put him off, begging delay;
Until at length she could delay no more,
Then yielded, half repenting, to his wish.

“So they were wed; and all her friends rejoiced,
For they knew not her fear, but thought of him,
As one endow'd with lands and gold; deeming
Where they were, happiness must be; and some
Indeed were envious that she had won
A prize so rich; but she pined more and more,
And the light seem'd to fade out of her life;
While a deep yearning ever at her heart
For something that she had not, made her sad.
Her husband too, altho' he loved her well,
Yet thought her strange, and wished she were more like
The women whom he knew; and so there came,
No blame to him or her, no blame to any,
An ever widening gulf between the two,
And drifting more and more apart, they lived

A separate life ; yet none the less, she tried
To do her duty unto him as wife,
And did it passing well ; but in her heart
Were vacant chambers, where he never came.

“ Thus three years passed away ; and she had learnt
That he could not be taught, tho’ she herself
His teacher were ; she could not kindle in him
The slightest sympathy ; as stolid he,
And unimpressionable as any ox
That fattened in his stall ; and all her dreams
Were fading, and her hopes grown cold, remain’d
Like worn out embers on a hearth, the signs
Of by-gone warmth making more desolate
And drear her soul ; when to the place there came
A stranger, rumour’d from a distant shire.
A lonely man he seem’d, not given much
To mix in company ; but accident
Threw him and her together ; had they met
In earlier years ’twould have been well for all,
For they were kindred souls ; but now alas
She was no longer free. Their intercourse

Grew into friendship ; ere they were aware
So stealthily love masters all the soul,
Their spirits leapt together, and they knew
Altho' they spake not, that their hearts were one.

“ 'Tis sweet at first, ere it is known as love,
To feel the gentle drawing each to each
Of man and woman ; that delicious sense
Of soothing fulness, which perchance to them
Has heretofore been wanting. Either feels
A deep and pure delight, yet scarce can tell
Whence comes the sweetness, nor doth think of it
But joyfully receive, until the light
Breaks on them and reveals the deep abyss
Whereon they stand. They wake, as from a dream
Of mellow lights, and richly tinted hues,
And witching forms, to find the cold grey dawn
Unveiling dreary landscapes. Broken once
The dream knows no renewal ; never more
To be as they have been ; and what they were
Lost utterly in what they have become ;
The Friend slain by the Lover. Thus with them,

Waked rudely from their dream, as sweet tho' brief
As ever gladdened mortal hearts, they knew
That life had lost its colour ; that for them
Nor joy nor hope remain'd ; Hope ! Could she hope,
The fruit of Hope being death ? Impossible.
It was an evil time, no fault of theirs,
Nor his, nor hers, nor his who woke at length
To feel that she had never been his wife
Save in the name ; an evil time for all,
Yet nothing could be done ; the hollow code
That governs modern life, grants no escape
To those once wedded, tho' their union prove
The fruitful source of misery ; save through
The ugly gate of sin.

“ With sinking hearts,
They recognis'd the truth, and never more
Could meet as they had met ; the secret thought,
Close hidden as they deem'd in their own minds,
Claim'd kinship with its fellow ; and each knew
What each would fain conceal. Instinctively
She shrank from him, lest some unguarded word
Should shape the thing she feared ; as one who walks

Beside a precipice with bandaged eyes,
She held her course ; fearing at every step
To slip and fall ; yet could not bid him go,
And thus reveal the secret of her soul,
But looked appealingly : he understood,
And, all self love refin'd by purer love,
Sought but her peace ; and tho' she had become
Dearer to him than sight unto the blind,
Or living streams unto the thirsty soul,
Or life itself, or aught that is most dear
To any man, yet tore himself away
His love unbreathed ; nor ever saw her more."

His voice brake, and a sudden wave of pain
Swept o'er his countenance, as thus he closed
The story of his life. Awhile we sat
In silence, then I softly, "Is she dead?"
"Not six months since," he answer'd, "Coming back
After long years of wandering to my home,
Thinking to see her once again before
I passed away from earth ; I found that she
Had gone before me into that dim land

Wherein the dead abide ; and now I wait
Impatiently, until the time shall come
For me to join her there. I cannot tell
Whether the dead have any consciousness,
Or lie in dreamless sleep ; I fain would hope,
That somewhere in the fathomless unknown
Their consciousness endureth, and they find
A fuller life : if it be thus, I know
That I shall meet her there ; and in that life
She will be mine ; but I would go to her ;
And if I find her, Well, and if not, Well,
For I shall rest ;” then rising from his seat,
In lower tone, “ There sleeps she, let us go ;”
And crossed the churchyard to a quiet nook
Where stood a well-kept grave. A simple stone
Bearing her name, said that she rested there.
The setting sun stream’d full upon the spot,
And as he stood bareheaded, reverently,
The light fell on his snowy locks, and crown’d
His brow with glory, that might well be thought
A fore gleam of some brighter world than ours.
I left him thus. In fullest sympathy

Both with the sorrow that had seared his youth,
And with the hope that now serenened his age,
I stole away and left him at the grave.

THE VOICE IN THE WIND.



Alone on the Carn ! Alone !

And the night winds hurrying by,
Croon to themselves in a monotone

Their low and wailing cry :

Wailing they come from the far off west,
Where the weary sun has been sooth'd to rest
By the wild waves' lullaby.

Alone, and the night grows dark,

And the evening fogs arise,

Through the gloom one star, like a fiery spark

Flashes, then instantly dies :

And darker and gloomier settles the night
Over the hill, as its tremulous light
Is hidden in mist from my eyes.

Alone, and a mystical spell

Is over my spirit cast,

And I hear the roll of a deep-toned bell
In the moan of the rushing blast ;
Clearer and clearer the mournful sound
Rings in the wind, waking grief profound,
'Tis the knell of the vanished Past.

'Tis gone, but an undertone
Lingering, falls on my ear ;
“ Grieve not over the flower that is blown,
The leaves that in Autumn are sere ;
For the falling flower gives place to the fruit,
And the fallen leaves nurture their mother-root
By dying, from year to year.

“ Grieve no more tho' like flowers,
Thy joys bloomed but for a day ;
Rather rejoice, that a few brief hours
They rendered thy pilgrimage gay ;
Grieve no more tho' Fortune may frown,
Grieve no more tho' the Sun be gone down,
For the darkness passeth away.

“ And Hope, like the Morning Star,
Grows bright with the waning night,

And its beautiful beams to the watchers are
The heralds of coming light ;
A little while and the silvern ray
Of Hope, shall fade in a golden day
Of joyance serene and bright."

Alone on the Carn ! Alone !
Alone with the hurrying wind !
And I hear no longer that sweet undertone,
But my heart grows calm and resigned ;
For its whispered teaching has given me power
To bear the ill of the passing hour,
With a firm and manly mind.

TO MARGARET.



Pearl, or Daisy, Margaret,
How shall I name thee !
Pearls adorn the coronet,
Daisies deck the lea ;
Ah ! I deem the Daisy sweetest,
And in every way the meetest
Emblem that can be,
Blooming Margaret of thee.

Daisy of the dying Spring,
Fairest flower of May ;
I with gladdest welcoming
Hail thy natal day.
Wake my lyre thy gayest measure,
Wake thy notes of mirth and pleasure,
With a joyous lay
Hail the Daisy's Natal day.

Margaret, may this day
Often return ;
And each succeeding May
New joys inurn ;
Sunny skies over thee
Serenely shine ;
Peace and Prosperity,
Twins, round thee twine ;
Sighing and sadness go
From thee away ;
Fuller thy gladness grow
Day unto day ;
Love with his joyance thy footsteps attend ;
Thus loving and loved, travel on to the end.

TO R. F. G.



I.

O false Merman with the yellow locks,
 Leaping and playing among the rocks,
 Dancing and singing,
 From rock to rock springing
 After the Maidens with loose-flowing hair ;
 Are these Mermaidens so wondrously fair ?
 Is thy life so sweet,
 So full and complete
 In thy ocean retreat,
 That thou hast forsaken the faithful earth-born,
 And his friendship unshaken requitest with scorn ;
 And canst leave thus to grieve,
 Him who did but believe
 That aught could be faithful and fair ?

II.

From thy pleasant home
 In the ocean wave,
 From the cool green cave,

Where the mosses grow, and the sea-weed creeps,
And the shell-fish play in the purple deeps,

Merman I bid thee come ;

Leave for a while

The Mermaidens, who smile

Upon thee beneath the sea ;

Come away, come away,

Leave the dance and the play,

The earth-born hath need of thee.

P.S.—

You said, and a Merman should not break his oath,

That's the privilege only of men ;

That you'd send me a letter at once, now I'm loth

To believe you are faithless, so shake off your sloth,

And instantly take up your pen.

Catch the grim Cuttlefish hurrying by,

And he will provide you with ink,

The fin or the tail of a fish, if you try

Will furnish a store of fine quills, and a dry

Broad leaf make good paper I think.

Your letter being written, tie round it a strip
Of the sea-weed that grows in your cave ;
Then bear it on board of yon taut little ship
Of the Nautilus line, riding ready to slip
From her moorings and skim o'er the wave.

LINES.

LIFE is full short for all the work that grows
Upon us, as we travel on our way,
Soon night her mantle o'er the landscape throws
And ends our little day.

And looking back, oft Memory rends the screen
That hides our past, and shows some noble thought,
Whose fruit of noble deed, has never been
Unto perfection brought,

But fell untimely, blighted by the wind
Of negligence, or crowded from its place
By newer fancies, for within the mind
Dreams run an endless race.

Too prone are we to dream, and rest content
With adding plan to plan, we leave undone
The harder task of their accomplishment,
Until to-morrow's sun

Has dawn'd upon us ; but while dreaming thus.
There is no pause in life ; unceasingly
The stream of time flows on, and beareth us
 Soon to the awesome sea,

Whose dark and stormy waters roll between
The unknown life and this. Ah let us lose
No further time, in mourning what has been
 Amiss, nor idly use

A single hour in dreaming childishly,
But guarding well the years that yet remain,
Redeem the wasted Past, if such it be,
 With sheaves of garnered grain.

THE SUNFLOWER.



IN a sequester'd garden

A Sunflower rais'd its head,

And turn'd its broad face towards the sun,

And on his bright beams fed ;

And as he travell'd on above,

It follow'd, by a deep strong love

Of the sweet sunlight led.

It laid no claim to beauty

Such as some flowers possess ;

And sometimes in the twilight, mourn'd

Its want of loveliness ;

But when the Sun was shining bright,

It knew no sorrow, for the light

Brought cloudless happiness.

And not a shade of sadness,

Or thought of want oppress

The Flower, as the revolving sun

It follow'd towards the west,
But glad itself, 'twould gladly share
With every living creature there,
The joy that fill'd its breast.

'Twas little that the Sunflower
Could do for others good,
But it in single-heartedness
Did all a Sunflower could ;
Unveil'd its beauty to the light,
Adorning with the colour bright,
The garden where it stood.

A lady in that garden,
One morning thoughtlessly
Said, " What an ugly Flower ! Look ! how
It stares upon the sky !"
The poor Flower heard, and hung its head,
And o'er its frame such sorrow spread
As when a cloud past by.

Its simple effort slighted,
The wounded Sunflower tried,

A little while, the bitter pain
 By jaunty mien, to hide ;
But all in vain, like barbéd dart
That sharp speech rankled in its heart,
 And soon it droopt and died.

“THOSE WERE HAPPY TIMES.”

YES, those were happy times, I often think
Of them, and wish that they could be again,
Yet know they never can : if once we drink
A draught of pleasure as we pass, we drain
All sweetness from the cup ; culled flowers shrink
And shrivel up and die. It gives me pain
To feel that pleasures gone have no renewal,
That they are dead as wood cut down for fuel.

I do not mean that we shall never know
Fresh joys and pleasures, but the dear old joys
Can never more be ours ; not even though
We three should meet again ; for Time alloys
So many of our feelings in its flow,
So changes us, so thoroughly destroys
Some aspects of our nature, that no more
We find the happiness we found of yore.

No Spring brings forth the flowers of former Springs,
 No Summer is exactly like the last,
 No Autumn on the lap of earth e'er flings
 The self-same erop, no Winter's over-cast
 By the same cloud and storm, no Season brings
 To us again the pleasures of the past ;
 The spirit lives, but ever changes form,
 In Flowers, Fruit, Pleasures, Cloud, Sunshine, and
 Storm.

As sometimes travellers in a barren land,
 Light all unwares upon a fertile spot,
 That, like an emerald 'mong worthless sand,
 Is more resplendent seen ; a little plot
 Of sweet fresh grass, where waving palm trees stand
 Fed by a bubbling spring, so 'tis the lot
 Of mortals, now and then to light upon
 Some green oasis, as they travel on.

Yea, there are oases of sweet delight
 Strewn here and there upon the track of time ;
 Where days glide by in melody, and night
 Is of the day, the complement and rhyme.

All is serene and shadowlessly bright,

We deem our happiness but in its prime,
When lo, we reach the confines of the land,
And see before us once again the sand.

And I have known some seasons, two or three,

In my short life, when joy has been supreme.
Most deeply graven on my Memory

Is one brief happy summer : like a dream
It comes before me now, again I see

Its crowded scenes of bliss. The fading gleam
Of sunlight on the hill, the glowing sky
Flaming in gold, the fretted tracery

Of crimson cloud, the far-off purple deep,

The creeping dark upon the eastward plain,
The growing night, the silent stately sweep
Of the bright stars o'erhead, I see again.

And blent with these the Memory I keep

Of sweet girl faces, eyes that then could rain
Bright kindly beams, arch laughter, sunny talk,
The music of soft voices and the twilight walk.

But they are gone. The Autumn came and swept
That Summer from its place, dream-like it fled
To be no more. Sad desolation crept
O'er everything with devastating tread.
The laughter died away, the music slept
Or woke for me no more. Among the dead
Is that bright summer now, and o'er my soul
Dark Winter reigns, and storms tempestuous roll.

THE SCULPTOR.

In Athens ere her glory died, a Sculptor day by day
Wrought on a block of Parian Stone that in his
studio lay.

A great Idea in his mind, and as the time roll'd on,
The beauty of his secret Thought thro' the white
marble shone.

Faintly at first, but as he wrought the Thought shone
clearer thro'
Till in his hands a lovely Form that block of marble
grew.

He wrought his life into the stone, the passion of his
soul
Lent vigour unto every line and vivified the whole.

Men deem'd him but a dreaming fool and mocking
turn'd away,
Friends chid him for his wasted life: uncheer'd by
sympathy,

Alone, but firm enough in soul to stand alone, he held
His steadfast course, and by strong will his own im-
patience quell'd.

Years roll'd away. At last the prize for which he
toil'd is won,

A finished work before him stands; a masterpiece is
done.

His Thought embodied in the stone, clothed in the
double might

Of strength and beauty, standeth clear, Food for a
Nation's sight.

The Sculptor died; his great work endures and thus
to men doth say,

"A noble thought thus nobly wrought can never pass
away."

Another voice too, has for him who listens carefully,

"Man carve in Marble and thy name on Earth shall
never die."

MIGNONETTE.



Fair Mignonette, meek Mignonette,
Thy very name is dear,
Thou art the summer's pride and pet,
The darling of the year.

Rare Mignonette, choice Mignonette,
Thou art a healing flower,
And often have I proved of late
The fulness of thy power.

Pure Mignonette, sweet Mignonette,
Thy fragrance fills my heart
With overflowing joy, ah let
That fragrance ne'er depart.

And though my day grow darker yet,
And wilder storms betide,
If thou art mine, dear Mignonette,
I care for nought beside.

THE LOST KITTEN.

A maiden had a little kitten,
Full of fun and play ;
And she loved it very dearly,
But it would not stay.
Forth into the night it wander'd,
From its home away.
Heedless Kitten, Foolish Kitten,
Thus to go astray.

For her little pet, the maiden
Hunted far and wide ;
Here and there and everywhere,
To find it vainly tried.
Then her heart with sorrow laden
Bitterly she cried ;
But soon she took another kitten
And her tears were dried.

THE REASON.

SAID Katie Leigh, one day to me,
“But will you tell me why
So long you wait before you mate?”
And thus I made reply.

“Oh why should I myself ally
To one among the throng
Of lasses fair? To do so were
To all the rest a wrong.

Go to the bee, and thou wilt see
She flits from flower to flower;
And teacheth us that we should thus,
‘Improve each shining hour.’

And I like her, my flight will steer
Among the blooming fair;

And gaily sip from many a lip,
The honey gather'd there.

And though my Love, you disapprove,
And shake your sunny curls ;
Full well I know that acting so,
I please all other girls."

THE STORM.



ON a headland, steep and barren,
That o'erlooks the western main,
Once I stood, my bosom heaving
With a storm of rage and pain.
Far below the angry breakers
Foam'd upon the rocky shore,
And the wave-worn caves resounded
With a deep and sullen roar.

Dark behind me stretched the country,
Dark before the waters lay,
Overhead the storm-clouds gathering,
Dimmed the cheerful light of day.
Then arose a furious tempest,
Blinding rain, and flying cloud,
Billows madly leaping sky-ward,
And the wild wind shrieking loud.

In our hours of deepest feeling
We are dead to bodily pain ;
Doubly cased in grief and anger,
What to me were wind and rain ?
Nought. I mock'd the storm with laughter ;
All its tumult and unrest,
Were but echoes of the passion
That was raging in my breast.

Fiercely spake I in my anger,
Hurling threats and curses wild,
'Gainst the reptile, whose envenomed
Tongue, had my good name defiled.
And the sea-gulls, screaming harshly
In the pauses of the wind,
Seem'd to mock me, seem'd like demon
Echoes of my own fierce mind.

Then a sudden change, and gentler
Feelings o'er my bosom swept ;
Tender Memories thaw'd the frozen
Fount of sorrow, and I wept

Bitterly as weeps an orphan
When the last sad rite is o'er,
As my Darling rose before me.
Darling, lost for evermore.

* * * * *

But last evening, we had wander'd
Happily upon the strand,
Where the waters now were tossing
Fathom-deep above the land ;
There upon yon rock we rested,
While the sun dipt in the sea ;
Watch'd the little vessels gliding
Towards the harbour merrily.

Peaceful were the Earth and Ocean,
But a ripple on the deep
Rock'd the cradle of the sunbeams
Till they gently fell asleep ;
Then the stars from heaven peering
Shyly down, their radiance gave ;

And the lighthouse in the distance,
 Flashed its warning o'er the wave.

O that hour of perfect joyance !

 O that happy eventide !

Still the memory lingers with me,
 And for ever will abide.

Soothingly the wavelets murmur'd,
 Peace upon our spirits fell,
Full our hearts to over-flowing
 With a joy too deep to tell.

All too soon the Evening glided

 (For all seasons of delight

Surely, swiftly hurry by us ;)

 Into the unwelcome night,

Till the darkness, growing deeper,

 Warn'd us speedily to part ;

And we kiss'd beneath the starlight,

 Lip to lip and heart to heart.

Then she left me, and I linger'd,

 Following her with loving look,

As she tript across the sand waste,
Till the path a turning took,
There a moment, glancing backward
Waving farewells through the night;
Thus the jutting rock embraced her,
Thus she vanished from my sight.

And a sudden desolation
Fell upon the land and sea ;
Gloom and shadow crowding round me
Evil prophets seem'd to be ;
Then I turn'd, and gazing seaward
Saw a misty wraithlike form,
Heard a low and distant moaning,
Portents of the coming storm.

Wherefore dwell upon these memories ?
Many years have past away
Since that evening, but I never
Since have seen my darling May.

SONNET.



When twilight fades, and over hill and dale
Night casts her shadow, and the mingled sounds
With which all day the busy earth abounds,
No more are heard ; in some sequester'd vale,
Or lonely wood, the lovesick Nightingale
Pours out his passion in a thrilling strain
Of richest music, seeking to obtain
Love for his love, nor does he often fail.
Sing happy bird ! my guide and teacher be,
Unfold the mystery of thy pleasing art,
I listen to thy strain, reveal to me
The secret of thy power, thy skill impart,
For I too love, and fain would learn of thee
To woo and win a gentle maiden's heart.

SPRING.

O sweetly I remember, broke
The Spring upon the earth last year ;
And with her gentle voice awoke
My sleeping soul to see and hear ;
To see the sights, and hear the sounds,
With which the youthful year abounds.

Old Winter, glowering on the world
That long had trembled 'neath his frown ;
One morning saw a leaf unfurled,
And moodily laid by his crown :
He knew the sign of his decay,
And wrothly weeping, fled away.

Then 'cross the pale blue overhead
The little clouds rejoicing flew ;
The winds grew mild, the glad sun shed
His beams on earth, earth gaily threw

Aside her sombre winter dress,
And robed herself with loveliness.

Then blazed the hills with golden broom,
Fresh daisies in the meadows sprang,
The scented gorse burst forth in bloom,
The woods grew green, the welkin rang
With song of birds, and on the breeze
Came borne the soothing hum of bees.

I lay upon the grass and quaffed
My fill of joy, I seem'd to be
A part of all I saw, and laughed
Aloud in pure light-hearted glee ;
And as in that sweet spot I lay
I thus unto myself did say :

“ Methinks, 'twere almost well to lose
The life so many cares alloy ;
And all the powers of being use
To make the gladness, not enjoy ;
To be the Daisy of the vale,
The Violet, or Primrose pale,

“ That Season after Season rise
 To life from a forgotten past ;
Nor know, as men more sadly wise,
 The misery of the Winter blast,
But sport awhile in Spring-time gay,
And with the Summer fade away ;

“ Or Butterfly ; or better still
 Yon Bird of blithe and buoyant wings,
That flits across the mead at will,
 Or heaven-ward exulting springs,
And breasting joyously the wind,
Leaves Earth and 'noyance far behind ;

“ Or that sweet Minstrel of the night,
 Who thrills the silence with a song
Of pure and sorrowless delight,
 Unstained by the grief and wrong,
That mingling poison in the brain,
Oft make our songs the voice of pain.

“ Yea this were happiness, as far
 Beyond the troubled joy we know,

As are the beams of Evening Star
Above that insect's feeble glow
That gleaming 'mid pavilions green,
By lated countrymen is seen.

“Vain dreams are these! I cannot be
As free from care as Bird or Flower,
Nor would I gain their liberty
By loss of intellectual power;
Yet I would share delightful Spring,
The happiness that thou dost bring.

“O, when the brain is overworn
With all the anxious toil of life,
Or, when the spirit grows forlorn
Amid its bitterness and strife;
No medicine so well abates
The pain, or nature recreates

“As thy pure joy: O, then among
The waving grass, I love to lie,
And hear around me gently rung
The sweet-toned bells of Fáéry;

Those sweet-toned bells, that in the ear
Ring out their music low yet clear,

“ Or listen to the cuckoo’s cry,
Or strain an upward glance to mark
Upon the clear back-ground of sky,
The speck that is a joyous lark ;
Or catch among the bracken tall
The tufted furze chip’s curious call ;

“ While round the brow soft breezes play,
And shed the delicate perfume,
That they have stolen on their way,
From some broad bank of gorse in bloom ;
And watch the ever-changing hues,
That o’er the azure sky diffuse,

“ Till all the glory of the Sun
Concentres in the golden west
And fades away, while one by one
The stars come forth in silver drest ;
And Silence, like a Dove, doth brood
O’er hill and valley mead and wood.”

THE COMMISSION.

POET.

From the cosy nest
Of my thoughts at rest,
Wake little Poem, Awake! Awake!
And the daintiest dress
Of words, in thy press,
Take little Poem, and gleefully make
Thyself as gay
As a garden in May,
When the sweet flowers creep
From their winter sleep,
And the morning dew from their petals shake.
Wake little Poem, Awake!

POEM.

I come, I come,
No longer I'm dumb;
My stanzas leap forth and rejoice.

Long have I lain
Asleep in thy brain,
But I wake at the sound of thy voice.

POET.

Tho' Darkness hath wound
His mantle around
The green earth, and drear is the way ;
Thro' night's wide dominion,
On thy swiftest pinion
Away little Poem, Away !
To the radiant East,
Like a captive releast ;
Like a spirit set free
From its prison house, flee !
Flee to the portals of Day ;
Where dwelleth a Lady
As bright as a May-Day,
As sweet as the Lily,
The pride of the Valley,
And fresh as a Midsummer Morn.

Go seek till you find her,
Then gently remind her,
Too long she has left me forlorn.

POEM.

I go, I go,
But how shall I know
This lady so graceful and fair?
For the East is wide,
And doubtless abide
Many fair ladies there.

POET.

In vain hast thou lain
So long in my brain,
If thou dost not know her by this;
She is graceful and fair,
With dark eyes and hair,
And lips that are ripe for a kiss.
And tho' there be many
Fair ladies, not any,

Or dearer to me is,
Or fairer than she is
To whom little Poem I send.
Away then Away !
No longer delay !
Thy flight to the Rising Sun bend.
And here is a spell,
By which thou mayst tell
When thou to this lady art near.
If thou seést a Lady
As bright as a May-Day,
In order to try her,
Flit noiselessly by her,
And breathe Mignonette in her ear.
Should a smile or a blush
O'er her countenance rush,
'Tis She, little Poem, 'tis She ;
Then humbly before her
Fall down, and adore her,
And bid her come soon unto me.

THE BEACH.



THREE in the afternoon. The winter sun,
Skirting the southern sky, hung near the earth
And feebly glimmer'd thro' the gath'ring fog.
The tide was out, and o'er the abandoned beach
Came a low moan as of a thing in pain ;
'Twas Ocean sobbing on the distant marge
Whereunto stretched in chilling wretchedness
A dismal plain of mud, with here and there
A boulder bedded deep, a pile of rock
Wave-worn, dark, rugged, dank and overgrown
With oozy seaweed, whose funereal folds
Sway'd mournfully ; a picce of sodden wreck
Left by the waves, a tangled heap of weed
And broken shells, an anchor time-decayed
Linked to a broken chain ; nought else but mud,
A cold and dreary waste, and over all
An icy mist crept shoreward from the deep.

Upon a rock far out upon the beach
A maiden sat, young and so beautiful
But sad ; too sad, for Youth and Joy are twins
That should go hand in hand, and tho' at times,
Since none is wholly free from grief, slight storms
May dim the sky, like spring showers should
they pass

Leaving no trace of wreck. Alone she sat,
Her sweet pale face made paler by the stream
Of dusky hair, that negligently fell
Adown in wavy folds, and in her eyes
Lustrous, and dark as is at times the hue
Of pansy petal tips, the dreamy look
Of one who gazing earnestly, yet seeth not
The thing whereon he looks. At length the still
Deep current of her thought was broken up
She heeding not the change, and measured words
Shaping this sad lament, fell from her lips,
While Ocean creeping nearer moan'd a bass.

“ O sombre sky, whence little light is shed !
O barren beach, whence life and joy have fled !

O weary heart, where even hope is dead !

How well ye three amate.

“ Too young am I to be so full of woe ;

Young ! Am I young ? It seemeth years ago

Since last I saw the honeysuckle blow

Beside my mother's gate.

“ And yet, since then, but one full year has flown,

Once only has the honeysuckle blown ;

Once ! Can it be ? O why thus here alone ?

Lone and so desolate ?

“ 'Tis like a dream ; would I could wake again

And find that I have only dreamt of pain,

It is so hard for ever on my brain

To feel this dreadful weight.

“ But that it is an awful thing to die,

A fearful thing for one so young as I

To leave sweet light, and in the cold grave lie,

O Death, I could not wait.

The mist drew closer round her, and the wind
Sigh'd in the offing, as her voice, subdued
By crowding thoughts, was for a season hush'd.
So little had her speaking been of will
She knew not when it ended, and remain'd
Still gazing seaward, till a startled cry
Broke from her lips, and sorrowfully she moan'd ;

“O Mother ! Mother ! on the mist appears
Thy gentle face, still smiling thro' thy tears,
As when thou saidst, with mingled hopes and fears,
Farewell, God bless thee Kate.

“O sweet sad Past, that looking back I see !
O Thou so trusted ! Thou so false to me !
O Shame and Sorrow that there now must be !
O Death ! I cannot wait.”

The waters crept around her inch by inch,
They slowly clomb the rock whereon she sat,

They reached the top and flow'd above her feet;
Then rose she, singing, "Death, I cannot wait,"
And like a tir'd child in mother's arms,
Lay down upon the rocking deep and slept.

ODE TO ENGLAND.



I.

ENGLAND, mefears thou art not as of old
 The guard of Freedom. Age has check'd the flow
 Of thy warm blood, thy pulse is beating low,
 Thy limbs grow weak, thy very heart is cold
 To every feeling save the love of gold,
 That vice of growing age. A splendid fame
 Thy stalwart sons won for thee, and thy name
 Rang thro' the listening earth, and tyranny controll'd.
 Free Bulwark of the Free! but thou canst boast
 That honour thine no longer; seeking nought
 But thine own ease, ease far too dearly bought
 At such a price, thou forfeitest thy post
 In Freedom's van. Alas, that thou shouldst be
 Too indolent to bear the yoke of Liberty!

II.

Recal thy storied Past. Thy children fought
 A holy warfare, and the costly rain

Of their life-blood, pour'd on the thirsty plain,
To break the bonds that Right Divine had wrought
To chain thy tameless soul. Thy spirit caught
The sacred flame, and thro' the dismal night
Of tyranny, blazed forth a beacon bright,
With hope and gladness to down-trodden Nations
fraught.

Then Milton* saw thee, like an eagle mune
Thy mighty youth, and thine undazl'd eyes
Kindle at the midday beam, he saw thee rise
Invincible and spread thy wings anew
For loftier flights, and thine abuséd sight
Purge at the fount itself of pure and heavenly light.

III.

Alas! too weak of wing thou flutter'dst down
From that pure air; thou couldst not bear the light
Of Liberty, full on thy naked sight,
And soughtst again the shadow of the crown.
Yet, England! yet, a true and just renown,
A deathless glory hast thou won, in spite
Of weakness then, since thou hast dar'd to fight

* Arcopagitica.

Against a Crownéd Head and braved a Priesthood's
frown.

For this we honour thee, yea deem thee great
Among the nations, and with keenest pain
Perceive thee listening to the fatal strain
Of siren songs, that lure thee to thy fate.
Chicfest among them is the voice of Gain,
That weaves its deadly knots around thy heart and
brain.

IV.

Accurséd Siren ! England lur'd by thee
Forswears her past, upon her hallow'd soil
Builds up an altar with unceasing toil,
Unto the Golden God, where Luxury,
Attendant Priest, her blood-bought liberty
Offers a sacrifice. As men of old
Bow'd down in worship to a calf of gold,
So England hast thou done bending to wealth thy
knee.

O for some dauntless Moses to appear
And grind thy calf to powder ; tho' he reave
Thy only God away from thee, and leave

Thy high place desolate, thine altar drear ;
Since thou, unmindful of thy former fame,
Bow'st in the dust to gold, thy glory and thy shame.

V.

Thou hast not knelt in vain, and Plutus brands
Thee, Millionaire of Earth. Whatever fame
Is link'd inseparably with such name
Is rightly thine. The wealth of many lands
Is pour'd into thy coffers ; Midas-hands
Are thine, that touch to riches ; every wind
Is treasure-laden, and the spoils of Ind
Afric and Araby are heap'd upon thy strands.
The very seas are whiten'd by the sails
That crowd unto thy ports ; in countless bands
Thy sons go forth, braving at thy commands
The perils of the wave, the furious gales
That sweep the ocean, and the treach'rous sands,
And sack the varied world to meet thy vast demands.

VI.

Thus Ancient Tyre, renown'd Ocean Queen,
Rose into greatness. First on Sidon's plain

She rear'd her walls, then leapt across the main
And double stood ; while ocean roll'd between,
And kiss'd her feet, and in his silver sheen
Mirror'd her mighty battlements, that high
Lifted their crests beneath the azure sky,
Frowning defiance stern by their majestic mien.
Thus too her daughter, exiled Dido's home,
Grew into power upon the Libyan coast.
How great her power ! that with embattled host
Could shake the empire of Eternal Rome.
O Carthage ! Tyre ! Magnificently great !
Dazzling your splendid noon, but terrible your fate.

VII.

Thus has it ever been. The world is heap'd
With broken fragments, relics of the great
And mighty empires, whose illustrious state
Once fill'd the Earth with wonder ; until steep'd
In pride and selfishness and lust, they reap'd
The bitter harvest that must ever wait
On such a seed-time. O how same their fate !
They slowly climb'd to wealth but thence to ruin,
 leap'd.

England, the moral of their story heed !
Tho' Time has dimmed the lustre of their fame,
The record of their greatness and their shame,
Still in their scatter'd ruins thou mayst read ;
This lesson carv'd on every stone mayst see,
There is no power in wealth to keep a people free.

THE CHARGE.

FORWARD! The Captain's voice above the battle din
rang clear,
And from the serried ranks of men broke forth an
answering cheer;
Then silence, as they near'd the foe, fell on them
every one,
And teeth were clench'd, and lips set firm, and tighter
clutch'd the gun.

A lurid canopy of smoke hung o'er the battle plain;
A sudden blaze, a deafening peal, a ghastly shower of
rain,
A deadly storm of bullets burst upon the advancing
band,
And strew'd them on the ground like leaves stript by
the North Wind's hand.

The ranks clos'd up, and faster still the living tide
roll'd on,

Nor stopt nor swerv'd again until the victory was
won ;

Like torrents rushing from the hills, it swept upon
the foe,

And the nerveless sword of tyranny was shatter'd by
the blow.

Among the fallen of that charge, a youthful warrior
lay ;

And from a bullet wound his life was ebbing fast
away ;

He heeded not the pain, his thoughts flew back to
Fatherland,

And from his breast a little case he drew with trem-
bling hand.

What charm is there ? What potent spell within that
little case

To cheer his dying spirit thus ? Nought but a maiden's
face ;

The face of her he lov'd and soon had made his own
dear wife,

But that a pair of tyrant kings must needs have his
poor life.

O curséd lust of power! O Kings who rule by Right
Divine!

And of that Right make bloody war the all convincing
sign;

How long, How long shall nations lie trembling
beneath your frown;

Rise Sons of Men! Arise! Be Free! Hurl every
tyrant down.

A look of speechless tenderness he bends upon his
love,

And sighs a dying wish that they may one day meet
above,

His eyes grow dim, his spirit leaves her tenement of
clay,

And gazing on her much loved face, from Earth he
fades away.

The battle done they found the youth stretch'd lifeless
on the plain,

The thirsty ground beneath him dyed by a dark
crimson stain,

A half smile still his visage wore, his hand still held
the case,

And still his glassy eye was fix'd upon the maiden's
face.

ODE TO CARN BREA.

I stood on the Carn one eve
 As the light faded out of the sky ;
 Overhead the grey storm-clouds swept hurriedly by,
 And drearily blew the wind.
 I could not but grieve
 As I gazed on the scene, and my sadness found vent
 In this little lament.

“ Old Carn, all thy glory has fled ;
 Thon art barren and desolate now,
 Winter has laid his cold hand on thy brow,
 No trace of thy beauty is left
 But the dying and dead,
 That tell in their death of a happier time,
 The day of their prime.

“ Old Carn, my spirit would weep
 For the death of thy summer delight,

For the radiant beauty that gladden'd my sight,
For the songsters whose music is hush'd
In a silence so deep :
Were it not that I see by the clear beam of Hope,
Spring dawn on thy slope.

“ Yea soon will the dark Winter pass,
And Summer revis't thee once more,
The birds will pour out their glad songs as before,
Thy slopes be reclad in their robe
Of fern and of grass.
Flee then my sadness ; tho' Winter be drear
The Spring-time is near.”

THE FAIRY SONG.

Two Fairies from that other realm
Which lies around us everywhere;
One evening flitting through the air,
Came to the spreading elm

'Neath which, far from the city's clang
And noise, at eve I love to lie:
And thus, as they came flitting by,
Methought the fairest sang.

“O Happy hearts where love abides!
Sweet is love,
O Happy hearts whate'er betides!
Sweet is love.

Love lightens Fortune's heaviest blow,
Love takes the sting from every woe,
Yea gladdens all the life below.

Sweet is love.”

I scarcely thought I was awake,
So passing strange the thing did seem;
Thought I 'tis but a pleasant dream :

When thus the other spake.

“ It may perhaps be sweet to love
When you are loved again ;
But something bitter is the pain
Of unrequited love.

“ Therefore I deem this counsel meet,
And could its fitness prove ;
‘ Let Friendship in but bar out love,
Love is a bitter-sweet.’ ”

“ O say not so,” the singer said
In such a sweet and mellow voice,
It would have made the sad rejoice,
It might have waked the dead.

“ O say not so, Love is a fruit
Of most delicious taste ;

A fount whose waters do not waste ;
A sweet and wholesome root.

“ Love thoroughly purifies the soul,
All selfishness expels,
All doubt and fear and envy quells,
All passion doth control.

“ Love pours the rarest perfume round
The heart of him who loves ;
His life is full of light ; he roves
Thro’ an enchanted ground.

“ And even should he never hear
The sweet responsive tone,
That, clearest echo of his own,
Would most delight his ear,

“ Yet not in vain the Lover loves,
Nor joyless is his lot :
For whether ’tis return’d or not,
True love a blessing proves.”

The Fairies flitting onward then,
Swept right across me as I lay ;
And as they lightly sped away,
 I heard the song again.

But both were joining in it now,
And fuller, clearer, grew the strain :
The music roll'd along the plain,
 It echoed from the brow

Of yonder hill, and then among
The glimmering stars it seem'd to be ;
And then across the distant sea
 The music fainter rung ;

At last it wholly died away.
But there will linger in my brain
The memory of that Fairy strain
 Until my dying day.

L I N E S .

At times fierce angers sweep across the mind,
Like turbulent waves upon some level beach ;
And in their dark and swelling depths, all kind
And gentle feelings, bury out of reach.

The wildest waves will fall ev'n as they rose,
The buried beach rise from the deep once more ;
But kindly feelings anger-drowned, are those
Of all men know, the hardest to restore.

LUCY IS MY DARLING.



Let others sing of maids divine,
And chant their praise in flattering line,
A simple country lass is mine ;
 Lucy is my darling.

One evening, sitting on a moss'd
Old tree, as thro' the glade I crost
I saw her, and my heart I lost.
 Lucy is my darling.

And while along my way I sped,
The little birds, as tho' they read
My secret thought, sang o'er my head
 • Lucy is my darling.

Dark are her eyes, and dark her hair,
And slightly pale her cheeks, yet rare
Fresh roses too are blooming there.
 Lucy is my darling.

And then her lips, so red and full,
Ripe cherries that none else may pull,
For me are founts of nectar cool.

Lucy is my darling.

Like waters flowing soothingly
Lucy now doth sound to me ;
A rippling stream of melody.

Lucy is my darling.

Whate'er my lot ; or joy or woe,
I care not as thro' life I go,
If until Death shall lay me low,

Lucy be my darling.

BESSIE.

I.

Silken lashes, golden tresses,
Rosy lips and cheeks are Bessie's ;
Sweet blue eyes where joy abideth,
Dimples wherein mischief hideth.
Now as grave as any statue,
Straightway laughing with you, at you !
And the gladness of her laughter
Without touch of sorrow after,
Thrills the listener with pleasure ;
And her voice, sweet as the measure
Of the blithest singing bird
That in opening spring is heard,
Falls like music on the ear
Melodiously soft and clear.

II.

Youth and joyance go together,
Like the Spring and sunny weather ;
But there is so much to grieve us,
And so soon our youth doth leave us,
That our hearts grow full of sadness :
But as Spring doth cheer the earth
So her pure and sorrowless mirth,
Lures my Spirit unto gladness.
Never may or pain or sorrow
Turn her merriment to weeping,
But, as time rolls on, still keeping
Youth's fresh heart, may every morrow
Prove a friend to her and bring
Happiness without a sting.

THE PLEA OF THE WOMEN.

MEN of England, hear our pleading !

What is freedom but a name,
When the half of all that's human,
Can of right no freedom claim ?

Hear us Men ! We plead for Freedom ;

We who have been slaves so long,
Weary of this degradation :

Will ye not redress our wrong ?

Men, we do not ask for favour,

All we seek is rightly ours ;
'Tis that we may be, as ye are,
Free to use our highest powers.

Think not we shall crave protection

'Gainst your strength, tho' ours be small :
We but seek to have the freedom
By ourselves to stand or fall.

Are we women only playthings,
With no strength of mind or soul,
That we never can be trusted
Of ourselves to have control?

Fools who must be soothed with nothings
Glibly uttered o'er and o'er?
We are weary of these trifles;
Pet us less but trust us more.

For we women are not angels,
Lay aside the flattering lie:
We are women, only women;
Share with you humanity.

In the sacred name of Freedom
Men of England, we appeal
Unto you to do us justice;
Hear us and our Freedom seal.

Courage Sisters! Bright before us
Beams the light of Liberty.
Courage Sisters! Onward! Onward!
Women must and shall be free.

PARADISE.



O Paradise ! thou fabled home of rest,
 Where primal man from care and pain was free !
 How turns at times the overwearied breast
 In hopeless longing backward unto thee.
 In hopeless longing ; for thou canst not be,
 Priests boldly say, again on Earth renewed ;
 They grant no end to human misery
 Till after death ; here pain, and deadly feud
 'Tween Right and Wrong, must rage for ever
 unsubdued.

For ever unsubdued ! O useless toil
 That then is laid on all of mortal mould !
 Thus thro' the ages on and on to moil
 In hopeless work ; like Sisypheus of old,
 Who up the hill, with ceaseless labour roll'd
 His unabiding stone. Haste Death to me !
 If this be all the future doth enfold

What gain to live? Were it not wise to flee
From such a world of strife and cureless misery?

But 'tis not all: let no man deem it true,
That men lie under such an awful doom;
That Paradise was granted to but two,
Whose falling made the world a living tomb
For unborn millions, who henceforth in gloom
Must pass the lives they sought not to obtain,
In endless strife their energies consume,
Nor ever hope the victory to gain
O'er wrong, injustice, hate, ill-passion, grief and
 pain.

Such Paradise was never in the Past.
It was a dream of some pain-bitten mind,
Some weary soul whose sky was overcast
With heavy clouds; who could in nothing find
One gleam of hope or joy; then in his blind
And sad despair, his troubled spirit turned
Unto the first of Time, that lies behind
The dawn of history, and there discerned
That Paradise of rest for which his spirit yearned.

O hapless soul to dream a dream like this !
Of what avail thy garden of delight ;
Thy thornless land ; thy bower of peace and bliss ;
Thy stainless Eden, wherein did unite
All that could please the taste or charm the sight,
Since all are gone ? How may they help thee bear
Thy present pain, how cheer thy spirit's night,
How strengthen thee beneath thy load of care,
How calm the passions strong thy bleeding heart
that tear ?

Vain dream if true, this dream of Eden lost ;
Yea worse than vain, for lost joy hath a sting,
That, piercing thro' the heart nipt by the frost
Of present woe, wakes keener suffering.
No longer then, my troubled spirit, cling
Thus hopelessly to joys thou canst not share ;
But mounting from the earth on hopeful wing,
Look thro' the gloom into the Future, where
Earth's Paradise appears, most gloriously fair.

Here in mid air the mist is roll'd away,
And with the Poet's eye I see afar

Faint beams of light, forerunners of the day
When men at length escaped from hate and war,
And tyranny, and all the ills that mar
The present hour, shall *make* their Paradise.
O Golden Age! How bright thy glories are!
How glad the prospect that before me lies,
As thro' the Vale of Time I dart my longing eyes.

Then Selfishness, the bane of all the Past,
The present bane, shall die before the might
Of newly wakened Love; then Hate be cast
Out of the hearts of men; then, as with night
Foul birds of prey wing from the plains their flight,
Shall Fear and Wrong in that fair morning flee.
Then Right prevail because it is the Right,
And Truth grow strong, and perfect liberty
Of Thought and Speech make every man and
woman free.

Then Superstition die, and men no more
Be driven to heartless worship by the dread
Of Death and Hell; nor creeds, as heretofore,
Mock with a stone the soul that craves for bread;

Forms of Religion cease, and man instead
Of healing sin by faith, be pure of soul
And virtuous by choice; then Knowledge shed
Her light on every mind, till Ignorance roll
Away from Earth and Wisdom every thought
control.

Then Kings and Kingly pomp shall pass away;
And worth not birth form the Nobility;
Then Governments lay down their needless sway;
And men, grown strong, and from ill passion free,
Lead temperate lives in nobler Anarchy;
Law be no more, for none will stoop to wrong
His fellow then, and Self-Respect shall be
More powerful than Law to check the strong
Fierce passions that now drive weak men like
leaves along.

Then Luxury, Pride, Lust, Disease, Grief, Pain,
Want, Shame, and Envy, vultures that now prey
Upon the heart of man, and gnaw his brain
With unappeas'd maw, shall in that day

Driven from their spoil, flee from the earth away.
Then Man, not innocent, but virtuous, at last
Shall enter on the life where Good hath sway;
The ideal life, whose light hath ever cast
Stray beams upon the gloom that darkened all
the Past.

O Golden Morn, towards which the world moves on
Our hearts are weary waiting for thee here!
O feeble hearts, that Morn will surely don
Its robe of light; and Day, resplendent, clear,
Gladden the waiting Earth. Ev'n now 'tis near;
Keen-sighted Hope can pierce beyond the dun
But swiftly waning night. Year after year
With heightened speed, as orbs that near the sun,
Shall Earth roll on her way until the goal be won.

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